

Weeks 11 and 12: Catalog It!

March 31 – April 7 and April 7 – 14

Once in the long ago past I took a course called Cataloging. It was a 14 week course where we were handed a set of notes each week, listened to a very nice teacher read the notes verbatim and then did some frightening and time consuming worksheets about cataloging when we went home. We had a week where we learned how to make card catalog cards just in case the internet broke and we all had to go back to the dark ages. I am glad I know how to do cataloging, but I have only needed a tiny bit of the information I learned in that class in the actual library media center where I work.

Schools are under-funded (I hope I am not bursting a bubble for any of you with that news) and there are very few schools that have the manpower to waste on hand cataloging. Copy cataloging is the norm in most school libraries. (This is when you purchase cataloging from the bookseller, use publishers' information or get Z39.50 records through your automated library system.) The only time I have written my own cataloging is when I am putting in strange things like equipment or archival items for the Beverly Educational Archives, which are affiliated with my library. The rest of the time I use others' cataloging.

CATALOG IT is a fantastic book that will give you all the background information to be able to do your own cataloging should you ever need it. For the next two weeks you will be reading this book and doing the exercise in chapters 4, 5 and 6 to make sure you understand what you are reading. You do not have to turn these exercises in, the answers are in the back and you should check them to see if you are grasping the concepts they are designed to teach you. If you get frustrated or confused, you can look at the answers and work backwards, too.

When you read this book, you are not reading it to memorize the content. The idea is to understand subject headings, Dewey and MARC records and how they work together to allow our patrons access to all we have to offer.

Part One is actually pretty interesting reading. It explains the main parts of cataloging, a bit of history and theory. When you get to Part Two: Application you are going to want to focus on the introductions and conclusions of the chapters and use the rest to help you figure out the exercises.

If possible you are going to want to take a look at the Sears List of Subject Headings and the Dewey Decimal Classification. You should be able to find Dewey in any library and Sears is in most. Salem State Library has several copies, but they are all in storage. If you are going to go to Salem State to look at it, please let me know ASAP and I will have it put on reserve so that you can just get it from the front desk. Also, there is a list of items on page vii-viii that Kaplan and Riedling suggest you have on hand as you read the book. They are not necessary, but will enhance your learning. They should be easily available through interlibrary loan.

The only assignments I will be seeing from you these two weeks are your blog posts and the discussion. Please make sure that you post on your blog and in the yahoo group by April 7 at 11:59 and again by April 14 at 11:59. Even though you are welcome to do the reading at your own pace, your responses should be evenly spread out so that you have two weeks worth of writing.

As I mentioned in the Module overview, the discussion for these weeks might be a little boring, so I went through and tried to find some topics in K&R that looked interesting. I have put them below, but feel free to post on whatever you like.

Interesting things about week 13: the April 14-21 is roped off for April vacation, but if you are the sort that wants to get things done, you can feel free to work ahead, just bear in mind that for week 13 you are going to need to interview a school library media specialist about their school's cataloging system. If you are currently working as an LMS, you may interview yourself. If you are in a school you can interview your LMS. If you don't have an LMS in your circle of peeps* let me know and I will find you one! You might want to set this up now, so that you can get right to business whenever you decide to get started.

As always, please contact me with any questions.

* In honor of spring, I give you the following:

<http://www.millikin.edu/staley/about/peeps/Pages/default.aspx>

Reading: Kaplan and Riedling 1-166 For discussion purposes, you should try to read up to page 89 for week 11 and pages 91-166 and go over the glossary for week 12.

Optional Reading: If you need fodder for discussion or blogging, the Arizona Dewey-free library articles might give you a boost. And if you want more background about Dewey, the Straight Dope article is interesting.

Adams, Cecil. "What's So Great About the Dewey Decimal System?" *The Straight Dope*. January 31, 2006. <http://www.straightdope.com/columns/read/2238/whats-so-great-about-the-dewey-decimal-system>

Lynch, Sarah N. and Eugene Mulero. "Dewey? At This Library With a Very Different Outlook, They Don't." *New York Times*, July 14, 2007.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/14/us/14dewey.html>

Whelen, Debra Lau. "Librarians Weigh in on Arizona's Dewey-Less Library." *School Library Journal*, June 6, 2007.

<http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/article/CA6449104.html>

Optional Exploration: Visit a library that uses the Dewey Decimal System. Try to get your hands on a copy of Dewey Decimal Classification Workbook and the Sears List of Subject Headings.

Assignment: The only assignment I will be checking (aside from the discussion) is your blog. You MUST post within each week a journal-style post on topics concerning the cataloging process.

There are exercises in the book on pages 59, 62, 63, 65, 88, 101, 110, 113, 118, 121, 122, 130, 136, 139 and 150. I urge you to work these through. They will not be turned in, but

if you are able to do them, you will know that you have a real grasp of the content for this book.

Discussion: Here are some discussion topics based on the readings.

WEEK 11

Here are some topics - but feel free to come up with your own, too!

K&R [p.2] say our materials should "accurately reflect the academic and leisure reading needs of our learning community". Do you think with budget slashing, both need should be given the same weight?

K&R [p.13] talk about curriculum mapping - have you seen it in your schools - or schools in which you have observed?

K&R [p.45] mention reading programs like Accelerated Reading. What is your opinion of these?

K&R [p.70] say that YA fiction can be hard to catalog if you haven't read it . What is the LMS's obligation to read the fiction she catalogs?

K&R [p. 89] discuss graphic novels, genre fiction and the like being placed in separate categories for ease. They say, "If we are trying to make independent library users of our students, before messing with assigned numbers, we should ask, 'What is more important, information literacy skills or quick access?'" What do you think?

WEEK 12

Here are some more discussion questions from Kaplan and Reidling - feel free to add your own!

K&R [p.125] talk about the possibility of using the same record for a hardcover and paperback copy of the same book. I have occasionally done this, but it makes my blood run cold. Any library OCD stories of your own you'd like to share?

K&R [p.137] mention how much kids love series books. What has your experience been with them? Any you particularly love/loathe?

K&R [p.139] bring up the point that some people ignore the 5XX tag because they don't have a use for it now but they might in the future. How important do you think it is to look ahead at what libraries might become?

K&R [p.151] say, "The librarian who skips the 5XX tag is doing a disservice to his or her community." Do they every make you feel guilty about the occasional shoddy cataloging? Why do I ask? Oh, no reason...

K&R [p.152] talk about cataloging equipment – do you do this at your school or have you observed it? How does it work? How about magazines? [p. 154]

K&R [p.159] bring up the idea of cataloging websites. Do you think this is feasible? What about a direct link from your catalog to a delicious site? Do you think it is more important at elementary level then secondary?